

What is claimed is:

1. A fingerprint authentication apparatus comprising:
  - a imaging section for obtaining an image of an object to be fingerprint authenticated, using an optical
  - 5 image sensor having infrared sensitivity;
  - an image processing section, which performs image processing of data obtained from said imaging section and obtaining a fingerprint image; and
  - a fingerprint comparison section, which performs a
  - 10 comparison between said fingerprint image and a priorly stored fingerprint image.
2. A fingerprint authentication apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said optical image sensor is selected from a group consisting of a CCD image sensor and a CMOS
- 15 image sensor, each having infrared sensitivity.
3. A fingerprint authentication apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising means for shining infrared light onto an object to be fingerprint authenticated.
4. A fingerprint authentication apparatus comprising:
  - 20 an imaging section comprising a first optical image sensor having infrared sensitivity and a second optical image sensor sensitivity in the visible light region, said first and second optical image sensors being mutually neighboring whereby obtaining an image of an
  - 25 object to be fingerprint authenticated;
  - an image processing section, which performs image processing of data obtained from said image processing section so as to obtain the fingerprint image; and

a fingerprint comparison section, which performs a comparison between said fingerprint image and a priorly stored fingerprint image.

5. A fingerprint authentication apparatus according to  
5 claim 4, wherein said first and second optical image sensors are both selected from a group consisting of a CCD image sensor and a CMOS image sensor, a P-well depth in said first optical image sensor is deeper than that of said second optical image sensor, and a concentration  
10 thereof is less than that of said second optical image sensor.

6. A fingerprint authentication apparatus according to claim 4, wherein said first optical image sensors is selected from a group consisting of a CCD image sensor  
15 and a CMOS image sensor each having infrared sensitivity, and wherein said second optical image sensor is formed by providing an infrared-cutting filter on said first optical image sensor.

7. A fingerprint authentication apparatus according to  
20 claim 4, further comprising means for shining infrared light and visible light onto said object to be fingerprint authenticated.

8. A fingerprint authentication apparatus according to claim 1, wherein a fingerprint image is obtained with  
25 said object to be fingerprint authenticated brought into contact with said imaging section.

9. A fingerprint authentication apparatus according to claim 4, wherein a fingerprint image is obtained with

said object to be fingerprint authenticated brought into contact with said imaging section.

10. A fingerprint authentication apparatus according to claim 1, wherein a fingerprint image is obtained with  
5 said object not in contact with said imaging section.

11. A fingerprint authentication apparatus according to claim 4, wherein a fingerprint image is obtained with said object not in contact with said imaging section.

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